

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-5, 8-11, 16-17, 19 and 20 are pending. Claims 1, 8, 16 and 19 having been amended and Claims 6-7, 9-10, 18 and 21 having been canceled by way of the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action the Information Disclosure Statement of 12/16/05 was objected to; Claims 1-7 were objected to as containing informalities; Claims 13-15 were rejected under 35 USC §101; Claims 13-21 were rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph; Claims 1, 3, 8, 10, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19 and 21 were rejected as being anticipated by Ohta (U.S. Patent No. 5,703,311, hereinafter "Ohta"); and Claims 1-21 were rejected as being anticipated by Hikawa (U.S. Patent 6,424,944, hereinafter "Hikawa").

In reply to the objection to the Information Disclosure Statement, Applicant respectfully submits that the "related case statement" does comply with MPEP §2001.06(b), requiring individuals to bring to the attention of the Office "co-pending U.S. applications" that may be material to patentability of the application in question. Applicant respectfully submits that the submission of the list of related cases complies with this MPEP requirement.

The objection to Claims 1-7 has been addressed by the amendment to Claims 1-5 (Claims 6 and 7 having been canceled).

The rejection of Claims 13-15 is moot in view of the cancellation of these claims.

Claims 16-17 have been amended to more clearly define the preamble consistent with 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Likewise, Claims 19-20, directed to autonomous robot apparatus, have been amended consistent with 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. However, if the Examiner disagrees, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned so that mutually agreeable claim language may be identified.

Claim 1 has been amended to define a method for synthesizing a singing voice and to include the steps of now cancelled Claims 6 and 7. Furthermore, Claim 1 has been amended to require that in the singing voice generating step, there is another step of correcting for a timing deviation of the music sound and a singing voice based on a sound source used in the music sound generating step. Support for this claim feature is found in Fig. 1 (element 14), Fig. 5 (step S7, in the specification, page 19, lines 8 – 15). Therefore, no new matter is added.

In particular, the method of Claim 1 includes a step of analyzing performance data as a musical information, a pitch, a duration and a lyric. A singing voice is generated based on the music information analyzed. A music sound is generated as accompaniment of the singing voice based on the performance data. The singing voice is mixed with the music sound as the singing voice is synchronized to the music sound. Furthermore, the method includes formulating the singing voice waveform and the music sound waveform in advance and mixing the wave forms together. Claim 1 has also been amended to include a feature for correcting for a timing deviation of the music sound and the singing voice based on a sound source used in the music sound generating step.

Ohta is directed to an electronic musical apparatus that synthesizes vocal sounds using format sound synthesis techniques. Ohta however does not include or suggest a step of correcting for a timing deviation of the music sound and singing voice based on a sound source used in a music sound generating step. Likewise, it is respectfully submitted that Hikawa also fails to teach or suggest such a feature. Moreover, Hikawa is directed to a singing apparatus that is capable for synthesizing vocal sounds for giving text data, but otherwise does not teach or suggest the feature of correcting for timing deviation problems.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that neither Ohta nor Hikawa, whether taken individually or in combination, teaches or suggests all of the features of amended Claim 1.

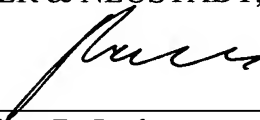
Application No. 10/799,779
Reply to Office Action of June 16, 2006

Although of differing statutory class and/or scope, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 2-5, 8-11, 16-17 and 19-20, as amended, also patentably define over Ohta and Hikawa for substantially the same reasons discussed above with regard to amended Claim 1.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the foregoing comments, it is respectfully submitted that the invention defined by Claims 1-5, 8-11, 16-17, 19 and 20 is definite and patentably distinguishing over the asserted prior art. The present application is therefore believed to be in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of this application is therefore requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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